

# THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS



WILLIAM FARNUM AS  
BEN HUR AT ENGLISH'S

The continued demand for seats for "Ben-Hur" and the record of receipts at the English Opera House so far have eclipsed anything in the line of dramatic entertainments with which Indianapolis is familiar. So great was the local interest in the production that it was apparent that English's Opera House would not accommodate the who were desirous of seeing this famous spectacle, during the two weeks originally allotted to Indianapolis. For this reason the local management prevailed on Klaw & Erlanger to extend the engagement for one week longer, and the drama will remain in Indianapolis until Saturday, December 13, making three weeks in all.

"Ben-Hur" occupies a unique position on the native stage, since it appeals alike to habitual theater patrons and those who seldom find enjoyment in the offerings of the stage. While the elaborate scenic equipment and realistic chariot race command the admiration of the spectators, the rare beauty and force of "Ben-Hur" as a drama give a lasting distinction to this most uplifting, inspiring and soul-stirring play.

There is nothing in the production to excite the criticism of the most devout Christian. In fact the play is drawing largely from people of Indianapolis and neighboring towns who are rarely seen in the theater. Clergymen of every denomination are seen in the audience, and the dignity and reverence with which the whole subject of "Ben-Hur" is treated on the stage has been favorably commented on by them.

It is announced that seats will be placed on sale at 9 o'clock Monday morning for the additional week, which commences on Tuesday, December 2, and continues until Saturday, December 13. The curtain will rise punctually at 8, and during the first week, and patrons are requested to be in their chairs at that hour to see the beautiful opening tableau, "The Star of Bethlehem."

The Grand-Vaudeville.

Probably the best combination in vaudeville that comes to this city is the Orpheum show, which opens for one week, with Monday matinee, at the Grand. It was organized by and is under the personal direction of Martin Beck, Eastern manager of the Orpheum circuit of theaters, and he has the pick of the vaudeville acts. There are naturally headliners in any combination and McIntyre and Heath fill the bill here. Since 1874 these two comedians have been amusing the public with presentations of the Southern darkey as he was before the war. They are especially funny and humorous. This time they will bring a sketch called "On Guard."

Nat M. Wills, "The happy tramp," is second in importance and he is a favorite that is seen here too seldom. He has been six years since Indianapolis people had an opportunity to see him. He is a type in himself of the genus "hobo" as seen not alone on the stage, but on the road. He is funny without being vulgar.

Nick Long and Idalene Colton present a new play called "Managerial Troubles," which gives Mrs. Colton a chance to give, by permission, imitations of Mrs. Fiske's "Bessie Sharp" and "The House of the Rising Sun." The sketch concludes with imitations of Italian of a noted Italian actress in "Camille." Others on the bill include Minnie Kokin, the dancer, who has special stage settings and elaborate electrical effects. She is a young French girl who has danced in all of the capitals of Europe and in the large cities of this country. Mrs. Wills and John are Australian boomerang throwers who were brought over from England for this engagement. They are of the same nationality, minstrelsy, who have once before been seen here and to good advantage. They play musical instruments in a good way. The Stelling troupe come from Europe with new material for a novel gymnastic act. The entire show is different from the one that appeared here last year.

Park—The Fatal Wedding.

The attraction at the Park all next week, opening with the usual matinee, Monday, will be "The Fatal Wedding." This attraction is a new one to the patrons of the Park. It was first presented early in September of last season at the Bijou Theater, Brooklyn, N. Y., and from the second night of its production played to "standing room only." This record has been duplicated everywhere it has been given. The play is a comedy-drama, with a story that is interesting and a plot that is clever and attractive.

The story tells of two adventurers, an unscrupulous man and woman, who are represented as endeavoring to wreck the lives of a happy married couple. Howard Wilson and his wife, Cora Williams, are the adventurers. Cora Williams wants Howard Wilson for her husband, and Curtis is secretly in love with Mrs. Wilson. Between them they hatch a plot to arouse suspicion in Howard as to the fidelity of his wife. Curtis poisons Mrs. Wilson's mind about her husband and gains consent to allow him to visit her in the evening, when he will reveal more to her. Wilson arrives home from his club and finds Curtis and his wife together. She declares her innocence of any wrong, but the husband refuses to believe her and orders a divorce and the custody of two children. Mrs. Wilson steals the children, with the help of a maid, and finds shelter in the tenement quarter, where she supports herself and them by sewing. Much interest is shown in this struggle against poverty and sickness. The Williams woman has promised Curtis \$2,000 in the event of the success of the scheme, this promise being put in writing, and this paper, being discovered just as she is about to marry Wilson, proves her undoing, and brings about a reconciliation between husband and wife.

PLAYS IN NEW YORK.

Mrs. Fiske's New Play the Meet Talked of This Season.

[Special to The Indianapolis News.]

NEW YORK, November 28.—While this week brought a lull in theatrical events, only one new production—there has been, nevertheless, much to talk about. The most discussed play has been Mrs. Fiske's "Mary of Magdala."

The new production was "Audrey," a dramatization by Horatio Ford and E. F. Woodruff, of Miss Mary Johnston's novel of that name, with Eleanor Robson in the title role—Miss Robson's stellar debut, by the way.

"Audrey," however, can not be pro-

nounced a remarkable success. It was greeted by a fair-sized audience at the Madison Square Theater, on Monday night, but aside from the applause by Miss Robson's personal friends, there was little demonstration of popular favor. It is remarkably lacking in action and overflows with talk. Frederick Perry, as the jealous Indian, carried off due honors of the evening, for besides being a clever actor, he had the only part worth mentioning. Eleanor Robson has a charming voice, a graceful presence and unquestionable talent. But in her first two acts she has no possible chance of distinguishing herself. It is a pity she should be launched in such a break play. The costumes and stage settings were all that could be desired. The play is full of the prettiest sort of stage pictures, but they alone will not carry it through.

Mrs. Fiske's Play.

There are as many opinions expressed of Mrs. Fiske and "Mary of Magdala" as there usually are of a candidate for office and the campaign issues. There is one thing, however, that can not be disputed, and that is that the play is a huge success. There has been absolutely no adverse comment as to the staging of the story, and the clergy and the Hebrew are well represented in every audience. Scenically, it is wonderful.

One of the most notable features of its reception by the audience is the lack of enthusiasm, there being almost an entire absence of applause. Some consider this tribute and tribute it must be—for there are some of the most dramatic climaxes ever put before a New York audience, which go by with merely a murmur on the part of the spectator.

"Who could applaud that powerful and beautiful scene at the end of the third act, where Judas is discovered, in the dark, as the betrayer of Christ?" is asked. "He could applaud that magnificent last act with all its remarkable mechanical effects and its superb acting, while Judas in awful despair has gone to hang himself."

In her strong emotional scenes, Mrs. Fiske is excellent; in fact one can call to mind an actress on the American stage who could give a more satisfactory performance. But in her first two acts she does not make a good impression. In the first place, her enunciation is wretched, and in the second place she lacks spirit, fire or action. However, it must be said that the part she has played is no piece throughout the drama. Mrs. Fiske dominates. There are three "star" parts, either of two of which are as powerful or more powerful than her own.

Tyrone Power's Judas.

Tyrone Power has won the real honors of the production, and it has been suggested by many critics that "the play should be called 'Judas,' and Tyrone Power should be written in large letters." A more awe-inspiring portrayal of a tragic role than his would be hard to imagine, and in the third act, when tempted beyond endurance, his love cast aside by Mary, his ambitions mocked by his Roman enemy and rival, he determines upon the betrayal of his once-loved master, his acting is superb.

Henry Woodruff, as Aulus Plautius, declared the lines of the play is kept behind the scenes, the principal danger of sacrilege to serious theatergoers. His device of religious atmosphere in this way will give the drama some of the popularity which "Ben-Hur" has enjoyed in church circles.

"Fad and Folly."

Mrs. Osborne put on a new play at her "society playhouse" on Thursday night. It is called "Fad and Folly," and, as much as she called on Kirk LaSalle for his assistance, it may be an improvement over her first play. A large number of members of the cast of her first production, "Tommy Rot," by the way, resigned because they "didn't like the atmosphere."

Louis Mann has been compelled to retire temporarily from the stage owing to serious throat trouble. His doctors say he must rest five weeks.

Rehearsals will begin at once of Clyde Fitch's "The Girl with the Green Eyes,"



IDALENE COLTON WITH  
THE ORPHEUM SHOW  
GRAND.



BABY BEATRICE, WITH  
"THE FATAL WEDDING,"  
PARK.

In which Miss Clara, Bloodgood will have the leading role. It will be here in the near future.

R. J. K.

A National Theater.

E. S. Willard, who will begin an engagement at the Garden Theater, presenting Louis N. Parker's drama, "The Cardinal," on December 2, will probably not visit America again in several years. He is enthusiastic over his plan to found a national theater in England, and after the close of his present American tour he expects to devote his entire energies to that project. When interviewed regarding the matter in Boston, last week, Mr. Willard said:

"I realize the difficulties of the establishment of a national theater in England, yet the realization of my dream is but the matter of a short time. I shall form a corporation for the founding of a theater as a permanent stock company, with a fund for pensions. The highest degree of excellence in plays and players will be maintained, and as each actor in the company knows he is a fixture for

life, his whole aim will be artistic excellence. No player of a repertory company can afford to depreciate his market value. I, for my part, am willing to give the life to the life of the theater. The stock company will be somewhat like the old Haymarket stock company in London. Daily company in America. The plays will be of long range and infinite variety, from Sheridan to Flaubert."

The Endowed Theater.

[New York Dramatic Mirror.]

The project of a subsidized or endowed repertory theater in this city continues to be discussed at frequent intervals, and its accomplishment seems further off than ever. One enthusiastic, but ill-informed, writer asserts that such a theater is possible in New York, "because of the syndicate, which is able to command at small cost the services of good actors for limited periods."

Another newspaper man, whose ingenuity was thereby disclosed, followed up this valuable "tip" with this result:

"Members of the syndicate were seen and asked their opinion of the idea of a subsidized repertory theater. They were not enthusiastic advocates of the plan. They said that such a theater would not make money and it was ridiculous to imagine any one man was rich enough to conduct a losing theater."

Naturally, in the judgment of the men composing the syndicate nothing that lies in the direction of the betterment of the stage or the development of a finer public taste is desirable, worthy of encouragement, or likely to make money. Successful in making money by a wholesale tax levy on the theatrical business and by the opportunities of cool and manipulative of the field engender, the members of the syndicate do not desire a change. The establishment of a repertory theater might inspire a demand for better things on the part of the public—the thing to which the syndicate is "unaccustomed and which would be difficult to supply."

Theaters, "game" alone. Let it be played in the same old way, with film-fam variations. To Hades with dramatic art—abundant and complete institution!

Irving and Terry.

A London theatrical writer says: "Sir Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry are enjoying great success in the provinces. The eminent manager is now preparing for his production of M. Sardou's 'Dante' at Drury Lane, next spring. It is in five acts, and there are no fewer than thirty speaking parts, but unfortunately there is not one that is suitable for Miss Terry, so that her name will not figure on the program. Those who have not read the drama might have thought that she would have been cast for Beatrice, but those who have seen the manuscript agree that the role is too slight for Miss Terry's histrionic genius. So, with the change of

there was some hitch in the matter of choosing a composer for the music, and Mr. Fitch retained the play."

John Drew presented last week to the Harvard University library a very valuable collection of theatrical history and biography, which he secured from the estate of the late Robert W. Lowe, of London. The collection included several hundred books and pamphlets, many of which are very rare.

Ellen Rowland has resigned from the Julia Marlowe company and has been engaged for Mrs. Bloodgood's company in the coming production of the new Clyde Fitch play, "The Girl with the Green Eyes."

Appreciating a Good Thing.

[Bloomfield News.]

It has been suggested that no other town of its size turns out so many people, considered as Bloomfield to the Indianapolis theaters. This is a compliment. In the first place, this is undeniable evidence of the general prosperity and well-being of the citizens, for neither actors nor houses, when they are doing business on the credit plan or accept less than the cash, in the second place, this speaks well for the general culture of the people, for they have the good judgment to pick out the best-class attractions, and only such do they patronize. In proof of this witness the large number of patrons who are going to see the "Ben-Hur" performance. The book reviewers, and the play, successful, cannot be otherwise than uplifting and inspiring.

Music Notes.

Arthur Hochmann, a noted young pianist, under the management of Miss Anna Miller, with many Eastern engagements, may be heard in Indianapolis before long.

New York musicians are still rejoicing over Victor Herbert's triumph in his operetta, "The Girl with the Green Eyes." Harry P. Smith, was moved to write the following joyous little nursery rhyme in honor of the occasion:

Victor Herbert, the young man,  
The Koven jumped over the moon;  
He played the piano,  
And Herbert composed the tune.

Hammerstein's new opera, "The Sleeping Beauty," is said to lack originality and color. One picture in it, "The Starry Night," is described as extremely beautiful, but the piece as a whole has found little favor. The New York Herald predicts that the opera, which will soon be over the "Beauty."

The New York Sun, through Mr. Henderson, finds young Kocian, who has just made his debut there, a marvelous technician, but lacking in the higher musical qualities. Kocian has a fine voice, but is lacking in rounded sonority and in that creative, warm, and glowing tone which is the mark of a great singer. In stepping the youth moves in the "Ernst" number, the melody of the fingerboard of his instrument. He exhibited exceptional certainty in his swiftness in the higher and lower registers, and in double stopping. In intricate successions of chords and in arpeggios he was clear and fluent, and crowded with passing notes and little trills, were played with pleasing rapidity, but almost unerring correctness. His bowing is full of vigor—something too much of it at times. But such youth and the ardor of an eager young spirit makes the repose of the finished artist hard to acquire. On the other hand, Kocian is a player who does not verseness only, he should be able to play with brilliancy of color, and this it can not be said that Kocian did. His tone was at all times deficient in life and magnetism. In the "Tschickowsky" numbers, he was even more cold than in the "Ernst" numbers, and, furthermore, in these the player imitates was sadly at fault. In short, so far as could be seen last evening, Kocian is a fingerboard virtuoso, but a smart manipulator of the bow. His Bach excerpt was performed with amazing speed and perfect clearness, but almost unerring correctness. His bowing is full of vigor—something too much of it at times. But such youth and the ardor of an eager young spirit makes the repose of the finished artist hard to acquire. On the other hand, Kocian is a player who does not verseness only, he should be able to play with brilliancy of color, and this it can not be said that Kocian did. His tone was at all times deficient in life and magnetism. 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